

Changing the winter mark-selective fishery season structure in Areas 6, 7 and 10 (UPDATED)

WDFW is considering changing the season structure of winter mark-selective chinook fisheries in Puget Sound **marine areas 6, 7 and 10** in order to provide anglers more certainty in these fisheries. The department would delay the October start to chinook fisheries to later in the year to avoid high encounter rates with juvenile fish. This should allow the fishery to remain open longer. WDFW is seeking comments on this proposal.

To meet obligations for managing fish listed under the Endangered Species Act (ESA), the department and tribal co-managers have agreed to a guideline for chinook encounters (retaining or releasing fish) in marine waters. Last year, a large number of juvenile chinook remained in marine waters later into the season than is typical. About 20 percent of the juvenile fish, which are too small to retain under state rules, do not survive after an angler hooks and releases them, as compared to 10 percent for adult salmon. Since a larger percentage of juvenile fish do not survive being released, fisheries can quickly reach the encounters guideline. During the 2015 season, WDFW had to limit or close fisheries in marine areas 6, 9 and 10 due to high encounter rates with juvenile chinook.